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SUBJECT: IRMO DIRECTOR'S MEETINGS WITH
COALITION AMBASSADORS TO DISCUSS NEW U.S.
INITIATIVES

REFS: SECSTATE 81769, BAGHDAD 02052, BAGHDAD 04045,
MNF-I FRAGO 05-120

1. Summary. During the period of October 16-25, IRMO Director Daniel Speckhard met separately with Ambassadors from the Republic of Korea, Japan, United Kingdom, Italy, Poland, and Australia. The IRMO Director briefed the ambassadors on three initiatives: U.S. plans to establish the first three Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Hilla (Babil), Mosul (Ninewa), and Kirkuk (Tamim); plans to launch an intensive ministerial capacity development program; and the planned deferral of IRRF-funded projects totaling \$1 billion. USAID Deputy Mission Director John Groarke detailed the creation of Ministerial Assistance Teams (MATs) and Core Functions Teams (CFTs) as part of the capacity development program. End summary.

2. On October 16, 2005, Ambassador Khalilzad and the IRMO Director met with Ki-Ho Chang, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, to discuss the prospects of Korean participation in the Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT)--the equivalent of a PRT that is planned to operate in the three northern Kurdish-majority governorates. Ambassador Chang noted that the ROK military is planning to vacate a limited amount of space at its forward operating base in Irbil and suggested that the future RRT could use this vacated space. He expressed his intent to consult with Seoul to determine Seoul's receptivity to the participation of ROK government personnel in the RRT.

3. On October 19, 2005, IRMO Director and IRMO Acting Senior Consultant for Planning met with Ambassador Toshiro Suzuki of Japan. IRMO Director invited Suzuki to join U.S. efforts in building national and provincial government capacity and to consider financing deferred IRRF projects. Suzuki echoed the importance of building ministerial capacity but explained Tokyo's policy prohibiting deployment of its civilian employees in Iraq. Suzuki also noted that no decision has been made by Tokyo on extending Japan's Self-Defense Force presence in Samawa; so he cannot comment at this moment on possible Japanese participation in a PRT. He stressed the need to secure the buy-in of the United Nations, World Bank, and donor nations for these new initiatives. For its part, Japan recently received a formal request from Baghdad to launch its \$3.5 billion soft loan program, which is expected to begin by March 2006. In principal, Suzuki said Japan can consider financing deferred IRRF projects that the Iraqi government considers priorities and agreed to a meeting next month in Amman with Iraqi and U.S. officials to discuss these projects in greater detail for funding through the yen loan program.

4. On October 20, 2005, IRMO Director, USAID Deputy, and IRMO Planning met with Ambassador William Patey of the United Kingdom. Patey highlighted the need to ensure that the U.S. ministerial capacity development initiative be sufficiently flexible to permit Iraqi buy-in and other donor participation, especially that of the United Nations and the World Bank. He noted that, as U.S. and U.K. reconstruction funds decline, the role of other donors becomes increasingly important. He explained that the UK can add value by using its position within the donor community to encourage it to pick up more of the reconstruction costs, and he advised that the U.S. initiative should rely on existing donor coordination structures, including the Iraqi Strategic Review Board (ISRB) and other donor aid programs. Patey remarked that provincial governance-building programs such as the PRTs should be coordinated with federal capacity-building efforts, especially

existing ministerial structures, and offered to share lessons learned on the U.K. success in establishing Iraqi-led, regional donor coordination structures in the four southern governorates. He also wanted to see how existing structures in MND South-East, specifically the U.K.-mentored Southern Iraq Reconstruction and Development Coordination Group (SIRDCG), could fit into the PRT concept.

15. On October 24, 2005, IRMO Director, USAID Deputy, MNF-I Rep, and POLOFF briefed Italian Ambassador de Martino on PRT implementation. IRMO Director cited the need to improve governance building within provincial governments and explained how the plan to build PRTs responds specifically to the needs of those provincial governments. De Martino thought the initiative was well conceived and recognized the need for all coalition partners to join in this initiative. He also noted the need for the Iraqi government to acknowledge and contribute support for the program. De Martino offered the possibility that the Italian Government might be interested in playing a role in the process and requested information about the possible role of the Italian Embassy on the National Coordination Team (NCT). He also stated that the Italian Government might be able to offer assistance in the training and operations of police forces. Finally, he suggested that, with the approval of the Iraqi Government, the Italian Government may be able to support or lead a PRT in Dhi Qar Province.

16. On October 24, 2005, IRMO Director, USAID Deputy, and MNF-I Rep met with Ambassador Ryscard Kyrstosick of Poland. IRMO Director began the discussion by describing the initial stages of the PRT proposal, and the USAID Deputy added that the national capacity-building effort aims to strengthen the core functions of the Iraqi Government. The Polish Ambassador expressed support for the capacity-building initiative and inquired whether training outside of Iraq would be part of the initiative, such as the extant EU rule of law training program. He welcomed the planned consultations with the Polish commander in the MND Center-South region and emphasized the important role of the PRTs in facilitating communications between the provinces and the central government, a key problem area in his view.

17. On October 25, 2005, IRMO Director, PolMilCouns, USAID Deputy, and IRMO Planning met with Ambassador Howard Brown of Australia. Brown supported the PRT's "holistic and integrative approach to helping Iraq" and believes that Canberra would consider participating in the initiative by providing experts to Baghdad. Although he does not see a near-term prospect of Australian participation in the PRTs (due to Canberra's strict policy of prohibiting the deployment of civilians in the field), he did not rule out the provision of a military liaison officer from its current military contingent in Iraq. Australia would be interested in receiving information from the PRTs in order to help Canberra reassess its deployment policy and offer technical assistance to provincial officials, particularly in the agriculture sector. Brown was pleased that the planned MATs would dovetail with other donor programs, particularly since they would improve information flows between donor nations. In response to Brown's observation that some ministries preferred "Arabists," IRMO Director noted that the initiative envisions the use of Iraqi expatriates when possible to deliver technical assistance to the ministries. Brown cautiously accepted the IRMO Director's invitation to join post's weekly Capacity Building Working Group meeting to help shape the capacity-building initiative, noting that, due to staff limitations, Australian participation must be limited.

Satterfield